Published on *University of Colorado* (https://www.cu.edu)

CU I&E Submission: ‘Ride-sharing’ in Research: An Innovative Model to Increase Efficiency in Providing Research Support [1]

Category

Sponsored Projects/Research

Submitted By

Merlin Ariefdjohan, merlin.ariefdjohan@cuanschutz.edu [2], Director of the Psychiatry Research Innovations (PRI)

Project Team

Merlin Ariefdjohan, merlin.ariefdjohan@cuanschutz.edu [2], Director of the Psychiatry Research Innovations (PRI)
Claudia Iannelli, claudia.iannelli@cuanschutz.edu [3], Research Manager

Project Description

We adapted the ‘ride sharing’ concept in our research support office (the Psychiatry Research Innovations; PRI) to effectively assist our faculty members with their research. Like Uber, where drivers are dispatched to ferry passengers for a fee, we supervise a pool of research specialists who are dispatched to faculty who request support. The time taken by our specialists to complete the request is converted into work hours (FTE) and charged to the respective faculty. Like Uber drivers who know the streets, these specialists possess specific skills to effectively assist research in psychiatry. Thus, in this analogy, the faculty are passengers, the research specialists are drivers, the FTE charges are the fare, and the PRI is Uber. As a case example, one research assistant concurrently assisted five faculty by managing participant reimbursement, drafting and submitting regulatory application documents, creating clinical databases, recruiting and consenting participants, and extracting data from medical records.

Project Efficiency

Our innovative ‘ride-sharing’ concept challenges the conventional model of research support in academic medicine. Instead of having a project manager and multiple research assistants for one faculty, our infrastructure assigns one research assistant to work concurrently with

multiple faculty. This is like Uber Pool, where one driver simultaneously picks up several passengers and drops them off at various destinations. This increases cost efficiency and flexibility by allowing faculty to stretch their budget by paying only for the services they need. It also enables our research specialists to build their skills quickly by being engaged in multiple projects.

Project Inspiration

Early-career faculty in academic medicine are required to develop robust research agenda while meeting demanding clinical and/or administrative commitments. They are expected to excel at this despite funding limitations. Conventional research models are costly, especially for faculty who do not need intensive assistance year-round. Adapting the ‘ride-sharing’ concept to research is the result of thinking outside the box, with the goal of stretching funding while not compromising research productivity and quality, and allowing greater support reach at any given time. It is a research model adapted specifically for faculty needs, and the PRI has demonstrated its viability over time.

What Makes You Happiest about this Project?

The success of our innovative model lies in teamwork between faculty and research specialists, as well as buy-in on all sides. We are happiest knowing our ‘ride-sharing in research’ model places faculty in positions to gather valuable data and to translate their incredible work into publications and presentations (despite funding constraints), and ultimately obtain additional funding. Subsequently, these demonstrated outcomes have improved work engagement and productivity, increased job satisfaction, and advanced the Department of Psychiatry’s research mission. We are happy not only about the project, but for everyone who benefits from this unique approach to supporting research and researchers.

Source URL:https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/past-submissions/cu-ie-submission-%E2%80%98ride-sharing%E2%80%99-research-innovative-model

Links
[1] https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/past-submissions/cu-ie-submission-%E2%80%98ride-sharing%E2%80%99-research-innovative-model [2] mailto:merlin.ariefdjohan@cuanschutz.edu
[3] mailto:claudia.iannelli@cuanschutz.edu